

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please replace the third paragraph on page 5 with the following:

As previously mentioned, there may be bandwidth problems associated with the MPT3 layer of an SS7 network. This may arise, for example, due to increasing numbers of short messages (SMS) which are being sent on mobile telephone networks, and which are conveyed by SS7 signaling messages. In order to overcome these problems SS7 network traffic may be offloaded via an IP network 308, as illustrated in Figure 3. In order to be able to send data from network equipment 302 to service application 306 via an IP network, a signaling gateway 310 is used to translate the MTP3 data to M3UA data. In order to route data via the IP network 308, the network equipment 302 is made aware that a route passing through the signaling gateway 310 is required. The signaling gateway 310 is also made aware that traffic intended for the application 306 is to be sent via the signaling gateway [[306]]310. The signaling gateway 312 converts the M3UA data back to MTP3 so that the data can finally reach the destination application 306.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please find below a listing of all of the pending claims. The status of each claim is set forth in parentheses. This listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application.

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

receiving a message from an originating network element at an interface of a service application, wherein the service application interfaces with both a Signaling System 7 (SS7) network and an Internet Protocol (IP) network, and wherein the message includes a point code associated with the originating network element;

accessing a network selection table comprised within a [[MT3]] message transport part layer 3 (MTP3) application programming interface (API) level of a protocol stack to determine how to process the message, wherein the protocol stack comprises both a ~~message transport part layer 3 (MTP3)~~ layer and a MTP3 user adaptation layer (M3UA) layer, and wherein the network selection table comprises entries that associate point codes with network types;

processing the message with the MTP3 layer if it is determined that the point code associated with the originating network element corresponds to the SS7 network; and

processing the message with the M3UA layer if it is determined that the point code associated with the originating network element corresponds to the IP network.

2. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the service application comprises a home location register (HLR) or a service control point (SCP).

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the network selection table is populated automatically.

5. (Currently Amended) A device, comprising:

a communication interface configured to receive a message from an originating network element, wherein the device interfaces with both a Signaling System 7 (SS7) network and an Internet Protocol (IP) network, and wherein the message includes a point code associated with the originating network element;

a processor; and

a computer-readable storage medium including computer-readable instruction stored therein that, upon execution by the processor, cause the device to:

access a network selection table comprised within a [[MT3]] message transport part layer 3 (MTP3) application programming interface (API) level of a protocol stack to determine how to process the message, wherein the protocol stack comprises both a ~~message transport part layer 3 (MTP3[[[]]]~~ layer and a MTP3 user adaptation layer (M3UA) layer, and wherein the network selection table comprises entries that associate point codes with network type;

process the message with the MTP3 layer if it is determined that the point code associated with the originating network element corresponds to the SS7 network; and

process the message with the M3UA layer if it is determined that the point code associated with the originating network element corresponds to the IP network.

6. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 5, wherein the device comprises a home location register (HLR) or a service control point (SCP).
7. (Canceled)
8. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 5, wherein the network selection table is populated automatically.
9. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 5, wherein the network selection table is populated manually.
10. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 5, wherein the network selection table comprised within the [[MT3]] MTP3 API level of the protocol stack is separate from a routing table in the MTP3 layer.
11. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 5, wherein the device is not a signaling gateway.
12. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 5, wherein the originating network element is a service switching point (SSP) or a message switching center (MSC).

13. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the network selection table comprised within the [[MT3]] MTP3 API level of the protocol stack is separate from a routing table in the MTP3 layer.
14. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the network selection table is populated manually.
15. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the service application is not a signaling gateway.
16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the originating network element is a service switching point (SSP) or a message switching center (MSC).